



FASHION INTERNATIONAL

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION WORLD

SEPTEMBER 1991

THE "LEG"END OF NYLON

In 1935, Dr. Wallace Carothers of Du Pont synthesized a "superpolymer" which could be transformed into fibers. Originally called "Fiber 66," three years later it was renamed nylon! Fashioned into stockings called "nylons," this new product became an enormous success with women worldwide, who often exhausted stocks of nylons as soon as they reached the stores. With the outbreak of WWII, all nylon was needed for the war effort, and women reverted to cotton or rayon stockings. Missing the look of

nylon, some women improvised by painting their legs with brown makeup, accented with eyebrow pencil-drawn seams. In 1946, frustrated with the post war nylon shortage, women mobbed the streets.

The next major revolution in the legwear story was the introduction of pantyhose in the '60s. Within a few years, pantyhose gained a 70% share of the market. L'eggs Products, offering the leading brand of sheer women's hosiery in the mass merchandise market, is a giant in this

area. "L'eggs was a classic case of finding a niche in the market and acting on the opportunity," explains L'eggs President Ron Zabel. "Research showed that a high quality product line supported by fresh marketing ideas could prosper in mass merchandising outlets." And it did! Despite the decline of department store hosiery share, L'eggs has thrived through its targeted approach, using both mass merchandising outlets and mail order. Another factor has been its innovative technol-

continued on page 2

A SIZZLING SEASON

Resort is a multi-purpose season that provides lightweight get-away clothes for the vacationing consumer, while supplying fresh colorful merchandise to the retailer for fourth-quarter impulse buying. Additionally it acts as a testing ground for Spring, allowing the designers an outlet to be whimsical. This often creates a profusion of exciting fashions, and Resort '91 is no exception!

Designers run the gamut of ideas, many offering swim or body suits as a base for their designs. Fabrics are fluid, with silks, knits, and rayon in the forefront, while denim, linen and raffia provide texture. Pantsuits emerge as capris and pajamas, often paired with a bandeau and matching jacket. Colors couldn't be hotter with

sizzling brights—yellow is important in many of the collections and brown replaces black in some.

Nobody does printed silks like MICHAEL KATZ. Vibrant hues in watercolor prints have a tropical Caribbean appeal. Fluid shapes, sometimes belted, are relaxed and easy to wear in 4-ply silk, charmeuse, and organza. Dresses look best in these exclusive prints, and there's a variety to choose from. Camisole and tank dresses often come with a topper such as an organza cardigan or floppy lapel jacket. Colors range from Santa Fe brights to pale sea shades.

A nautical influence prevails at ALBERT NIPON COLLECTION.

continued on page 2



JENNIFER GEORGE

The "Leg" END of Nylon continued

ogy. Until L'eggs debuted in 1970, the hosiery industry used the "boarding" process to give hosiery a shape similar to a woman's leg. The concept of a one-size, unboarded product offering excellent fit, attractiveness, and convenience was unique. "Consistent high quality at a reasonable price was also a very important objective in the development of L'eggs," Zabel adds, "Research confirmed that women would buy a high quality, well fitting hosiery product in the stores they shopped at most frequently. Good fit was the missing link women were looking for, and we knew we could deliver that. We then had to develop an integrated unit in which name, package, and display would work together." They decided on the egg-shaped container, which was displayed on a rotating "boutique." To persuade retailers to grant floor space to L'eggs, they offered the unique space efficient displays on consignment. There were no hidden costs. Retailers simply had to donate two feet of floor space and collect the profits. "We've stuck to our no risk, no obligation consignment policy for retailers, and a guarantee of quality to consumers. This has kept us growing for nearly 20 years," concludes Zabel. L'eggs now ranks number one in unit volume—the hosiery market leader.

Due to the success of the mass merchandising approach, department stores are currently declining in hosiery market share by 1% each year. It is hoped that the recent introduction of "designer name" hosiery will be successful, enabling department and specialty stores to regain a higher share of the hosiery market. Frank Oswald, group manager of marketing at Du Pont, in a recent article in *Accessories Magazine* explains, "Designer names in hosiery have helped to make the category more understandable to store management who is used to taking a position with designer ready-to-wear." This RTW/legwear marriage forces change, and increases the potential of legwear at the department store level. Designer labels currently available are Liz Claiborne, Givenchy, Donna Karan, Anne

Klein, Calvin Klein, and Ellen Tracy. Harve Benard and Nicole Miller will be available in the near future.

However, the latest hosiery innovation is not in marketing, but in technology. It comes in the form of Du Pont's new Avantige bicomponent nylon fiber, and is aimed at the upscale hosiery market. According to Du Pont, "the unique structure of bicomponent (Avantige) is a non-homogeneous mix of two different nylon polymers per filament, as opposed to conventional nylon where each filament possesses only one homogenous polymer." What does this mean? It means that when Avantige Nylon is combined with Lycra, legwear will be smoother, softer, silkier, and more sheer. It also assures, the company promises, superior comfort and improved fit. To confirm these claims, JPR Marketing Research Services Inc., undertook a consumer preference test in preparation for the recent debut of Avantige. An overwhelming 66% of the 272 women who were "blind" tested preferred the pantyhose using the Avantige bicomponent over the traditional product. Although Avantige is "technically not released to consumers yet....,"

comments Du Pont's PR spokesperson, Eileen Wallach, of the Rowland Company, "some manufacturers have used Avantige for Fall '91, but Du Pont is pushing it for Spring '92." Hanes Hosiery, a division of the Sara Lee Company, is one of the manufacturers making a limited quantity of Avantige available for Fall '91.

And where is the hosiery industry headed after Spring '92? Visit the International Hosiery Exhibition (IHE), in Charlotte, N.C., sponsored by the National Association of Hosiery Manufacturers, a national trade association representing the manufacturers of more than 85% of the hosiery produced in the U.S. This year they moved to larger facilities in order to meet the increasing need for exhibit space. Jenette Robinson, director of the trade show, noted that they "...are eager to offer both domestic and foreign manufacturers the opportunity to look at and acquire the newest technology in hosiery manufacturing." Technical innovation, coupled with the resurgence of interest in legs at the fashion level, should ensure that the IHE will have a fine turnout indeed!

A Sizzling Season continued

Sophisticated dresses, with a classic femininity, are in navy and white faille and double-faced crepe. Detachable collars and cuffs add versatility to many of the designs, while gold Lurex detailing takes the look into evening. For NIPON BOUTIQUE, a brightly colored "Calypso" print in washed silk captures the essence of the season in dresses, and in suits with a complementary stripe.

Designing under his own label for just over two years, ZANG TOI's signature is his mixing of the exotic with the familiar. For Resort, he uses a traditional pattern, from the Iban people of northern Borneo, in refined French lace. An example of his marriage of sharp and soft is the short-sleeved poorboy turtleneck jacket with French lace skirt. Denim in white, indigo, black, and brown is set off by breezy chiffon separates.

continued on page 5



CARMELLO POMODORO

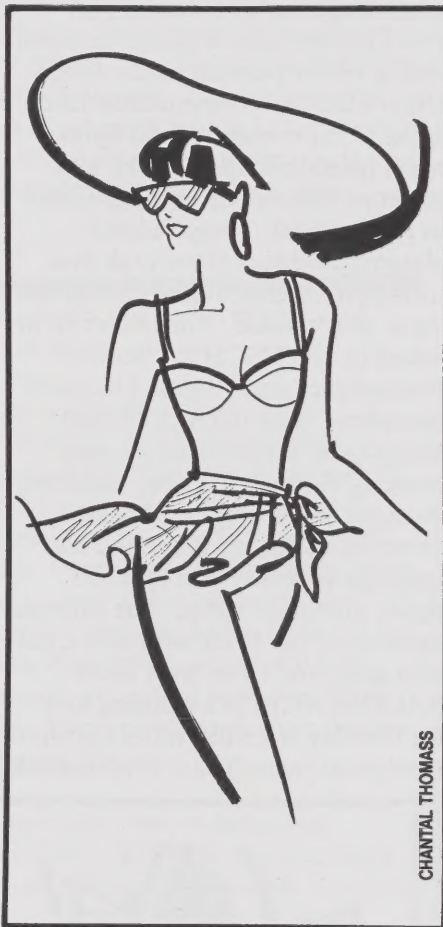
MAKING A SPLASH

With so much of what's happening in swimwear design a reflection of RTW trends and influences, swimwear that's actually seaworthy gives cause to rejoice. This time around, designers have done the impossible by producing swimwear that's both highly glamorous, inventive, and figure flattering. Swimsuits in a wide array of colors, shapes, and patterns make the most of every figure type. And "apres" swim, there are a multitude of options from which to choose—flirty babydoll ruffled skirts, skintight cocktail shakers, sleek catsuits, and everything in between.

Color is most definitely driving the market. Look for blue-cast jewel tones, color blocking, sectioning, and trimming. There are brightened pastels, from '60s inspired icy pinks, mint, teal, coral, and lilac to sophisticated bronze, olive, steel blue, sage, and gold. CACHAREL combines two important trends — pastels (pale blush/teal/dusty mauve/pale violet) are color blocked in a square neck tank. Pastels turn up again at VIEW-POINT in a Bardot-inspired turquoise two-piece suit with a gingham checked puff sleeved crop top over a bow tied organdy miniskirt (in matching check). MICHAEL KORS' swimsuits triumph with offbeat colors: a draped off-the-shoulder iridescent green suit, a gold lame two-piece with sheath front, and a two-piece tank suit in sage, embellished all over with clear sequins. A matching pull-on miniskirt takes this look dancing. BETSEY GONZALEZ transforms the simple tank by constructing it in gray rubber and adding a silver belt at the hip. HUIT revives the boy-leg halter suit in marine blue ottoman and adds three tortoise buttons for punctuation. Prints and patterns range from GOTTEX's brightly colored scarf printed catsuits, VALENTINO's dalmation spotted two-piece sarong draped swimsuit, CALVIN KLEIN's red/white striped tank bikini and skintight capris to

TANGO ROSE's bikini in a floral/check combo.

This season designers take the plunge with cleavage enhancing underwires, molded cups, and padded bra tops.



At COTE d'AZUR, the shirred firm cup bikini worn under a sheer flowing pant, both in gold coin dotted eggplant, and the banded underwire bikini in passion pink (great with its print pareu) go a long way towards achieving the perfect bustline. CHRISTINA's impressionistic floral underwire camisole maillot defines the figure beautifully. At GOTTEX, the molded cup suits are featured prominently throughout the collection. Outstanding styles include the "liquid gold" draped metallic two-piece and the black/white "chess" patterned maillot, sizzling with jolts of orange and green at the top of the cups. Very sophisticated is BILL BLASS' black and white sectioned

underwire bandeau and ATHENA's lingerie strapped underwire tank maillot in a navy mosaic pattern, touched with antique gold foil trim. At GIDEON OBERSON, there are a multitude of bustline defining suits. The jewel-toned abstract print bikini with molded underwire cups and softly shirred shoulder straps is a knockout. The answer to the less than perfect body might well lie with SWIM SYSTEMS' line of neon bright separate tops (molded or padded) and bottoms. Sold individually, they can be mix/matched in a variety of ways. At BAREFOOT MISS, the bust is emphasized in a high-waisted bikini with an underwire push-up bra. The suit is striped in luscious guava/raspberry or ocean/limeade. For the less well endowed, BILL BLASS' "Picasso floral" twist bra tank, in sunny spice tones on a white ground, and CHANTAL THOMASS' blue/gray shirred underwire are just the ticket. Spectacular is the word for THOMASS' sheer black fishnet tank with strategically placed colorful patches—best worn on a willowy body.

The lingerie influence is apparent in the proliferation of sheer mesh and net inserts. In GOTTEX's inventive "Santa Fe" group, a sheer cap sleeved bodysuit in bright emerald is worn over a matching two-piece bandeau bikini. A showstopper is their sheer yellow high necked tank with sexy sequin cups, worn under a lace edged tulle miniskirt. CALVIN KLEIN shows a bandeau with mesh midriff insert, while VALENTINO adds net inserts to the cups and sides of his white bikini. ANNE COLE's underwire mesh maillot and zip front tank with mesh insert (from the "Franco mosquito" group) are definitely "bella"! Softly suggestive is CHANTAL THOMASS' all black underwire maillot with attached sheer mousseline side tied skirt.

For outright sleek and sexy suits, look no further than ANNE COLE and COTE d'AZUR. The former shows a weightless Lycra "patent" bi-colored red/black tank with patent waist cincher; while the latter offers a

continued on page 6

SOMETHING'S AFOOT IN LEGWEAR

Not since the '60s, the era of the miniskirt, have we seen the fashion industry take such an interest in legwear. It may not be coincidental that the legwear trends for the upcoming Holiday season and going forward to Spring, somewhat reflect the prevailing styles of that time. However, for Fall '91, the influence comes decidedly from menswear. Opaques and sheer hosiery feature paisley, houndstooth, and herringbone designs, with ribs on tights and leggings in a variety of weights. The former focus on rich Autumnal hues of moss green, pumpkin, burgundy, granite, aubergine, and sable. Plaid is also a major player for both Fall and Holiday, shown in color combinations that range from reds to teal blues. Solid sheers and opaques, in Fall's best fashion colors, offer an alternative to patterning and textural interest. The ANNE KLEIN COLLECTION from PENNACO, launched for Fall, offers sheers, opaques, and velour opaques in solid soft neutrals, and in fashion colors. Patterns and detailing include herringbone, cable stripe, heat-hered looks, as well as pleated and jewel accents. In classic Fall colors, RALPH LAUREN HOSIERY (pioneer of bringing the man-tailored sock into the women's market), features sheer, ultra sheer, opaque and rib opaque Lycra pantyhose, in addition to cotton rib tights, and mesh and floral mesh pantyhose. Herringbone and houndstooth are the patterns of choice. HOT SOX introduces their premiere collection of tights and leggings for Fall/Holiday. Designed to target department and specialty stores, fabrications include nylon, cotton with Lycra spandex, and nylon with Lycra. Both their solid and novelty legwear (ribs, florals, lace looks, paisley, wallpaper designs), mix vegetable and earth tones with neutrals.

Holiday is predicted to be a sparkling one with a '60s flare—many manufacturers are including metal-

lics or metallic looks in their lines. Hues range from silver and gold to bronze and pewter, in tights, leggings, and sheers. Holiday hits from HOT SOX take the form of shimmered lace leggings in black with a silver taupe embellishment, and black nylon/Lycra leggings accented with a velour passementerie design. Other Holiday stories include lace looks in capri leggings and tights, mesh (predominately black), and velvet or velvet flock leggings (some in capri styles). There's also a glamorous black sheer look that incorporates glittering stones on the leg or at the ankle. The latter can be found in GIVENCHY's "Jewels Fantastique" and "Bijoux Decoratif" pantyhose, both in black French ultra sheer. HUE features a vast range of Holiday winners, including Baroque scroll leggings (flocked velvet on mesh), embroidered lace leggings, shimmer lace brocade tights, and plaid tights. The shimmer tights combine black with silver, gold with gold, and silver with silver. RALPH LAUREN's winning look for Holiday is a solid velvet stirrup in a polyester/nylon/Lycra combination.

By next Spring, you will see a proliferation of bold legwear statements in the form of opaque tights, leggings, bike shorts, and capri leggings, in hot brights (warm reds, teal, sunflower yellow, vibrant pink), or in sorbet or ocean/ecologically inspired pastels (aqua, coral, peach, magnolia, sand). Classics of navy, white, ivory, black, and coffee will become mainstays in both opaques and sheers. The '60s will once again leave its mark with a riot of floral designs and dots in contrasting colors, or subtly woven tonally into mesh, sheer, or opaque styles. For Spring '92, GIVENCHY offers soft pales, translucent hues (ranging from La Creme to Cafe Brown), neutrals, darks, and fashion colors of pink, aqua, mauve, green, blue, and red. In the latter, styles include "Millefleurs," in Lycra lace etched with flowers, "Le Victoire," a leaf design on a French ultra sheer pantyhose, and "Petit Point Backseam Pantyhose," a control top ultra sheer. HUE is very much influenced by Miami themes, from Deco architecture to the beach. Sorbet pastels and hot brights in an incredible range of hues permeate such designs as "Dizzy Dots," offered in opaque tights and capri leggings, "Satin Lace," in nylon/Lycra tights and capri leggings, and daisy deco-

continued on page 5



Something's Afoot continued

rated tights in Antron/nylon/Lycra fishnet. Most tights and capri styles are offered in sock form (as heavier denier, or in cotton). Their recently launched control top tights in 90% nylon and 10% Lycra (one size fits all), will be available in white, ivory, Loden, petal pink, flamingo pink, black, navy, and turquoise. "Liquid Metal" leggings will be featured in silver and gold with matching body top. CUSTOM COLLECTION, by PENNACO HOSIERY, goes the contemporary route with triple opaque capri tights with Lycra (also as bike tights), in classic Spring colors, as well as sea lettuce, lime, anemone, blue ocean, azure sea, purple plume, peacock fan, and coral fish. Featuring a special "Olympic Collection,"

A Sizzling Season continued

At CARMELO POMODORO, innovative fabrications are drenched in color for an unusual grouping of brights. Lemon, mandarin, hot pink, and citrine are combined with black and white separates. But the news is in the fabric. In addition to crepe, chiffon, sandwashed and shantung, silk is used in a "leno organza," a very fine knit used for tops and jackets. Microfiber is also used for sculptured unitards and bodysuits, while stretch raffia provides texture for fringed "grass" skirts.

CHRISTIAN FRANCIS ROTH, known for his whimsical tongue-in-cheek designs, presents a collection based on "dressing" and "undressing." Using unorthodox color combinations such as fuchsia/mint and peach/aqua, Roth creates trompe l'oeil versions of "unlaced" dresses and "unzipped" jackets, both in silk satin. Another group focuses on ombre shading in blue and red linen pieces for day.

Having designed this collection during the last month of her pregnancy, JENNIFER GEORGE emphasizes that it is one of "essentials." Big shirts, in solid or striped cotton poplin, work with denim capri pants or as easy jackets over bare bra tops. Tie-front tunics slide over pull-on shorts and skirts, in cotton or silk. Colors are mouth-watering in kiwi,

for Spring, ROUND THE CLOCK HOSIERY, employs the patriotic symbols of red, white, and blue in their line. Spain, the host country for the Olympics, is represented by such hues as Spanish Sun, Gothic Green, Playa Turquoise, Picasso Pink, and Miro Magenta. In addition to the Olympic color themes, they are adding iced lavender to their range of pales, and new coffee to their basics. Fashion styles include a Lycra lace pantyhose, knee high and thigh high "Olympic Stars" pantyhose (allover star design), and pantyhose featuring sailboat designs. For evening, gold and silver sparkle on a Lycra sheer leg with control top, while pearls and bows adorn another sheer style.

mandarin, raspberry, poppy, and apple green.

Color is the catalyst at ISAAC MIZRAHI. In his "fiesta wear" group, polka dots, stripes, and plaid work together in brightly colored ensembles of silk taffeta and shantung. Pantsuits look new, and can be just as sexy as his "mambo" and "samba" dresses. Focus is on the leg in another group, where childlike rompers are paired with everything from flirty dresses to pinstrip double-breasted blazers.

In her third year of designing, CYNTHIA STEFFE creates a modern yet feminine collection. A variety of skirts, shorts, and pants work under short or long jackets in coconut rayon crepe. Similar bodies are in a lightweight tropical wool paired with cotton daisy lace for texture (in pink, kiwi, orchid, and grapefruit). The "deep sea blues" group in navy, turquoise and lapis, with venise lace separates in deep navy working as accents.

Known for quality knits, DON SAYRES FOR WELLMORE presents a colorful Resort collection in lightweight wool blends. Body conscious dresses and easy chemises are in pink, orange, yellow, turquoise, and white, with suits sporting three-quarter jackets and pleated skirts. Evening details include beading and

embroidery (done by hand in India), illusion necklines, satin ribbons, and lace sleeves.

At RANDOLPH DUKE, sand and black linen are cut into sculptured jackets, dresses, slim pants, and shorts. Details come in self knots, fringed hems, and guipure embroideries. A red, white, and blue group adds patriotic flare with flag motifs on cotton pique.

Two noteworthy collections are at the MICHAEL ATCHINSON showroom. BRADLEY BAYOU creates brightly colored separates and dresses using matte and shiny sequins; while EVA CHUN provides glamour with dramatic eveningwear in shirred bodies of chiffon, velvet, and lace.



"For Resort...
"Color is the
Catalyst..."

stretch black patent leather tank with chalk white industrial zippers. There's also a biker jacket in matching patent.

This is the year to indulge in cover-ups. Some of the best designs are HUIT's criss-crossed back bowed stretch halter dress in black with white dots, GIDEON OBERSON's black Lycra cocktail shaker with clear sequin embellishment on the printed molded cups, BILL BLASS' racer-back cotton floral swing dress, AUSTRAL's hot orchid or turquoise bike shorts, RALPH LAUREN's nostalgic postcard printed sarong, ROBIN PICCONE's fluttery short white organza skirt, and possibly the best cover-up of all—ANNE COLE's short bright silk trench!



INTERNATIONAL DATELINE. . .

SEPT. 13-17 **BALEARIC ISLAND, SPAIN**
SEBIME (Int'l Costume Jewelry)

SEPT. 13-17 **FLORENCE**
MODIT (Women's)

SEPT. 15-17 **CHICAGO**
SPRING/SUMMER (Men's/Young Men's)

SEPT. 18-20 **MADRID**
SALON CIBELES (Women's Spring)

SEPT. 18-22 **MADRID**
BISUTEX (Costume Jewelry)

SEPT. 20-23 **MILAN**
MICAM MODACALZATURA (Footwear)

SEPT. 20-23 **DUSSELDORF**
GDS INT'L (Shoe Fair)

SEPT. 21-24 **PARIS**
SEMAINE INT'L DU CUIR (Leather)

SEPT. 22-24 **MONTREAL**
CANADIAN INT'L WOMENSWEAR SHOW (Spring)

July 22-24 **MONTREAL**
MODE ENFANTINE (Children's)

SEPT. 22-24 **BERLIN**
MODABERLIN
(East/West European Fashions for men/women/children)

SEPT. 23-25 **LAS VEGAS**
LAVA (Women's)

SEPT. 24-26 **NEW YORK**
INPRINTS NY (Textile Print Design)

SEPT. 24-27 **ATLANTA**
BOBBIN SHOW

SEPT. 24-25 **ONTARIO**
TORONTO COLLECTIONS
(Women's Spring)

SEPT. 24-26 **LILLE, FRANCE**
INDIGO (Textiles/Yarns)

SEPT. 24-26 **LONDON**
FABREX (Fabrics)

SEPT. 28-OCT. 1 **FLORENCE**
PRATO EXPO (Textiles)

SEPT. 28-OCT. 2 **BARCELONA**
BARNAJOYA (Jewelry, watches, silver)

SEPT. 29-30 **NEW YORK**
AVANT PREMIERE
(Women's RTW/Accessories)

SEPT. 29-OCT. 1 **NEW YORK**
NEW YORK PRET
(Int'l Womenswear & Accessories)

SEPT. 29-OCT. 1 **NEW YORK**
FASHION COTERIE
(Womenswear & Accessories)

SEPT. 29-OCT. 1 **NEW YORK**
DONNA MODA (Italian Womenswear)

SEPT. 29-OCT. 1 **NEW YORK**
CANADA MODE CANADIAN WOMENSWEAR

SEPT. 30-OCT. 18 **NEW YORK**
BRIDAL MARKET (Spring)

OCT. 1-3 **MILAN**
MODA IN (Textiles)

OCT. 4-8 **MILAN**
CONTEMPORARY (Womenswear)

OCT. 5-7 **MADRID**
EXPOCALZADO (Footwear)

OCT. 5-8 **PARIS**
PREMIERE VISION (Fabrics)

OCT. 6-10 **MILAN**
DESIGNER RTW COLLECTIONS (Women's)

OCT. 7-10 **LOS ANGELES**
PREVIEW OF SWIMWEAR & SPRING RTW

OCT. 11-14 **LONDON**
DESIGNER RTW COLLECTIONS (Women's)

OCT. 13-15 **LOS ANGELES**
PLUS SIZE MARKET

OCT. 15-17 **NEW YORK**
N.Y. FABRIC SHOW

OCT. 16-23 **PARIS**
DESIGNER RTW COLLECTIONS (Women's)

OCT. 18-21 **PARIS**
PARIS SUR MODE (Int'l RTW Collections)

OCT. 18-21 **PARIS**
PREMIERE CLASSE (Accessories)

OCT. 18-21 **MILAN**
MIPEL (Leather/Accessories)

OCT. 20-23 **NEW YORK**
INTERNATIONAL KIDS SHOW

OCT. 20-23 **NEW YORK**
NAMSAB (Nat'l Assn. Men's Sportswear Buyers)

OCT. 24-30 **DALLAS**
SPRING RTW & BRIDAL MARKET

OCT. 28-NOV. 8 **NEW YORK**
DESIGNER RTW COLLECTIONS
(Runway Shows, 11/1-8)

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